

Disposition of Remains Report Timor-Leste

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Maximum Period before Burial

No specific laws or regulations in the country regulate the maximum period for remains to be interned.

Embalming

The National Hospital in Dili has embalming facilities and can accommodate remains for a maximum period of one month. There is no specific required period for remains to be embalmed but embalming is suggested as soon as possible after death.

The hospital provides hyper-dermic embalming services to facilitate exportation of the remains. Arterial embalming is not available. It costs between \$100 and \$200 for embalming. The hospital also charges \$25 per night for storage of remains at the mortuary.

Cremation

There are no regulations concerning cremation procedures in Timor-Leste. A local company, Anteater, provides cremation service, which costs \$3,000 and takes 8 to 10 hours. Cremation requires a letter from the National Hospital, which the company will use to issue the certificate of cremation.

Caskets and containers

There are caskets and containers available locally but they do not meet the requirements for shipment out of the country. Wooden caskets can be built for a cost of approximately \$700 to \$1,500, with additional costs for lead lining. Shipping agencies can facilitate the acquisition of caskets and containers suitable for shipment outside country. Please contact the Embassy for the most current logistics information. The hospital charges \$50 for a body bag, and will arrange for the body to be transported to the airport.

Exportation of remains

There are no specific local regulations concerning the exportation of ashes and remains. However, the prevailing practices require certain documents for shipment, which may include certificates of death from the Ministry of Justice, certificates of casket and sealing from the casket provider, certificate of embalming from the Ministry of Health/National Hospital, a copy of the passport of the deceased, and certificate of approval from the country of final destination. The shipping company may also require a letter from the funeral home taking charge of the remains at the destination.

Costs

Local service agencies provide no fixed costs. The costs depend on the type and extent of services. Embalming costs between \$100 and \$200, and storage of remains is \$25 per night at the National Hospital Mortuary Services. Caskets and containers for local use cost around \$750. Caskets built for out of country shipment cost approximately \$700 to \$1,500, with additional costs for lead lining. For preparation of shipping and air shipping of remains, the shipping company charges based on the size of the shipment, as well as its destination. There are no fixed price lists for remains to be exported to the United States but a past example suggests costs of around \$10,000 for shipping to the eastern U.S.

Exhumation and shipment

There are no laws or regulations concerning the disinterment or shipment of remains outside the country.

Autopsy

An autopsy is held when there is a request from the families and relatives after getting approval from the Police and Public Prosecution Office. Autopsy services are offered free of charge; however, there can be significant delays in obtaining the autopsy results and having the report finalized.

Remarks

Timor-Leste does not have yet a specific regulation for the disposition of remains outside the country. There are limited services available for cremation, embalming, and exportation and the procedures for certifying all required documents may be slow. International logistic service companies are the most expedient means of exportation and air shipping of the remains.